

# The State Broadband Index - Summary Findings for Top 10 States

(From A *TechNet* Report - July 17, 2003)

## 1. Michigan

As the leader in aggressive broadband policy, Michigan has implemented the following strategies:

- The LinkMichigan initiative created a formal plan implemented under strong leadership from the Governor
  - The initiative resulted in three legislative acts that created the Michigan Broadband Development Authority, the Michigan Extension Telecommunications Rights-of-Way Oversight Authority and a property tax credit incentive for deployment of new infrastructure.
- Michigan has strategically eliminated barriers to deployment
  - The METRO Act eliminated disparities in rights-of-way access charges and delays across the state, and in the process ensured that the access fees are relatively low and based on cost.
  - Under METRO, Michigan has implemented a fixed right-of-way fee, standardized application, central authority for fee collection, a 45 day time limit on municipality action on permit, a streamlined process for resolution of disputes, and limits on local regulations
- Michigan aggressively promotes broadband deployment
  - Michigan Broadband Development Authority provides loans to broadband providers and users in an effort to fill in the gaps of deployment to under-served communities.
  - Michigan has assessed statewide deployment to pinpoint the areas that lack broadband.
  - A plan to aggregate public-sector network use is currently underway.
- Michigan promotes broadband use and applications
  - MI Department of Corrections uses telemedicine to reduce costs
  - Distance learning is available via Virtual University and Virtual High School

## 2. Florida

- Florida has strategically eliminated barriers to deployment
  - Florida has simplified right-of-way fees. The Florida Communications Services Tax collects a single tax comprised of a state and local communications service tax. Municipalities receive .24% of the tax in lieu of right-of-way fees.
- Florida actively promotes broadband deployment and broadband access
  - The State Technology Office coordinates state broadband efforts. The STO also oversees Florida's Digital Divide Council Clearinghouse that identifies digital divide efforts, best practices and provides grants to sustain projects.
  - The state leases all communications facilities from the telecommunications industry to promote broadband deployment, aggregating their demand.
    - In an effort to increase network access points, broadband suppliers receive tax refunds for equipment purchases.
    - Public-sector users receive discounts for broadband access
    - Florida encourages the use of Wi-Fi deployment, using high encryption standards.
- Florida actively uses and encourages innovative broadband applications
  - Delivering pediatric care through telemedicine and the initiative of Telehealth & Education
  - Distance learning through Virtual Schools and libraries
  - homeland security via the Law Enforcement Radio System
  - Development of Intelligent Transportation Systems
  - Streaming video of legislative activity.

## 3. Missouri

- Missouri has taken steps to eliminate impediments from right-of-way permits
  - 31 day limit for municipalities to take action on right-of-way permit requests for specific excavations
  - Fees are based on the actual substantiated costs reasonably incurred by the political subdivision in managing the public right of way.
  - Local regulations that set requirements unrelated to right-of-way usage and charging for in-kind compensation in return for ROW are prohibited.
  - Provides a streamlined resolution for rights-of-way disputes.
- Missouri owns a backbone, MORENet, which provides innovative application to the public-sector
  - Provides Internet connectivity, access to Internet2, technical support, videoconferencing services and training to Missouri's K-12 schools, colleges and universities, public libraries, health care, state government and other affiliates.
- Missouri has promoted broadband applications through telemedicine funding and distance learning programs.

## 4. Texas

- Texas has developed a strategic plan under the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board.
  - The fund awards grants and loans for educational institutions, libraries, and non-profit hospitals (it looks like the governor vetoed it in the budget...)
- Texas has taken steps to eliminate right-of-way barriers to deployment
  - Though Texas does not have a time limit for municipalities to act on permits, it requires that a reasonable effort be made not to delay or cause undue burden
  - Municipalities are prohibited from charging in kind compensation beyond ROW fees
  - Texas has a fixed fee rate
- Texas actively promotes broadband deployment
  - Texas encourages competitive building access.
  - Texas allows Austin Energy's property to be available for wireless antennas for a fee
  - Texas has gone beyond FCC's unbundling requirements in interconnection disputes.
  - Texas owns Texas Agency Network which provides long distance voice (AT&T) and statewide data services (SBC) to all state agencies. It offers discounts and loans to public sector users for access.
- Texas has a telemedicine program, a distance learning program and streaming video of legislative activity.

## 5. Ohio

- Ohio has a formal plan in place to guide Ohio's broadband vision
  - Ohio has assessed its broadband deployment in conjunction with the Technology Policy Group to aid deployment efforts.

The Broadband Initiative is composed of 5 components to spur broadband

- Ohio Broadband Link is an effort to aggregate the purchasing power of businesses to obtain affordable rates on broadband services
  - Third Frontier Network is a high-speed link for Ohio college and research facilities
  - ECommunities is a pilot program in which the state will provide broadband services to 2 rural Ohio communities
  - EVantage Ohio is an effort to train small businesses about e-commerce
  - The State Coordinating Mechanism coordinates and reviews broadband activity.
- Ohio has taken steps to eliminate right-of-way barriers to deployment.
    - 30 day limit on permit action by municipalities
    - A reasonable cost limit on permit fees, limited to the recovery of the direct incremental costs incurred by the political subdivision in inspecting and reviewing any plans and specifications and in granting the associated permit.

- Ohio's Access Appalachia program assesses the supply and demand of the 29 counties in the Appalachian mountains and outlines a plan for rural deployment
- Ohio actively uses broadband application through its telemedicine program, Ohio One; several distance learning networks, and streaming video of the legislature.

## 6. Washington

- Washington has taken steps to eliminate right-of-way barriers
  - Limits the number of days for a municipality to act to 30 days
  - Uses a reasonable cost limit for permit fees
  - Prohibits local regulations that set requirements unrelated to rights-of-way usage
  - Prohibits municipalities from charging in kind compensation for ROW access
- Washington actively promotes broadband deployment
  - Washington encourages competitive building access.
  - Washington operates its own state-owned backbone, K-20 and Statewide Enterprise Network.
  - Washington Department for Community Trade and Development provides grants to suppliers for broadband deployment.
  - Wash has a Center to Bridge the Divide to address the digital divide.
- Washington supports the development of online application for government applications.
  - Washington State's Department of Information Services established a Digital Government Applications Academy where state agencies work together and collaborate to create online applications for their needs. Projects result in an Applications Template and Outfitting Model (ATOM), which provides a guide to building and implementing Internet applications and includes information on policies, business, technical, project management, and authorizing requirements for government e-commerce applications.

## 7. Kansas

- Kansas has taken steps to eliminate the right-of-way barriers to deployment
  - 30 day limit for municipalities to act on permits
  - Municipalities are prohibited from charging in-kind compensation beyond ROW fees
  - Fees are limited to reasonable cost
  - Kansas regulates wholesale broadband access beyond FCC mandated unbundling.
- Kansas has a map of current broadband deployment to aid further investments.
- Kansas' Kan-ed network supplies access for schools, libraries and hospitals. Through this network Kansas provides telemedicine and distance learning.
- Kansas has innovative broadband applications such as video arraignment services and live streaming audio of legislative activities.

## 8. Virginia

- Virginia has developed a formal broadband plan under the Secretary of Technology Virginia Center of Innovative Technology. The plan has 8 initiatives:
  - **Revolutionize service delivery to our customers** through implementation of a customer-facing Internet portal and increasing the quantity, quality, and adoption of online services, particularly in the area of online licensure and interactive forms.
  - **Consolidate IT infrastructure and provide centralized services** as a technology utility. The plan also calls for developing a comprehensive, statewide information security program and for overhauling state administrative systems in the area of finance, planning and budgeting, and human resources.
  - **Plan, budget, and track IT expenditures** by developing a capital planning and funding process for IT, developing a comprehensive technology management policy, and improving systems to track IT expenditures.
  - **Manage IT procurement** by developing and implementing a best practice model for effective and timely IT procurements.
  - **Increase federal research and development funding** to industry and Virginia's colleges and universities, including historically black colleges and universities
  - **Increase commercialization of intellectual property** from Virginia's labs, entrepreneurs, and institutions of higher education, and grow entrepreneurial companies.
  - **Increase statewide broadband deployment**, especially in Virginia's rural areas, to enhance economic development.
  - **Promote technology-based economic development** in Virginia by "growing" technology companies.
- Virginia has taken steps to eliminate right-of-way barriers to deployment
  - 45 day limit on permits
  - fixed rate for fees, prohibits municipalities from in-kind compensation
- Virginia's state-owned property is available for wireless antennas.
- Virginia is active in promoting broadband access
  - CovaNet and Net.Work. Virginia provides access for both the public and private sector at discount rates
  - COVANet brings infrastructure into areas that otherwise may not be served.
  - Virginia aggregates demand for schools, agencies and libraries.
  - Virginia has a digital divide program
- Virginia has actively supported broadband applications
  - Virginia telemedicine network
  - Distance learning
  - Wireless E-911

## 9. Colorado

- Colorado has taken steps to eliminate right-of-way barriers to deployment
  - Encourages coordinated rights-of-way with multiple providers.
  - Reasonable cost limit to fees.
  - Prohibits municipalities from demanding in kind compensation beyond ROW fees
- Colorado makes state-owned property available to wireless antennas
- Colorado High Speed Digital Network and the Multi-use Network is a private/public partnership
  - The MNT aggregates state networks for libraries, schools, local governments, and hospitals
  - The High Speed Digital Network allows businesses to connect for a low price
- Rural Technology Enterprise Zone provides tax incentives for rural deployment.
- Colorado actively promotes the use of broadband applications
  - Expanding telemedicine services
  - Distance learning K-12 programs
  - Live streaming of governor's state of the state address

## 10. Iowa

- Iowa has taken steps to eliminate right-of-way barriers to deployment
  - Offers streamlined resolution of disputes
  - State encourages coordinated rights of way with multiple providers
  - Reasonable cost limits on fees
  - Prohibition on municipalities to ask for in kind compensation for ROW access
- Iowa Communications Network- The Iowa Communications Network offers applications such as distance learning, telemedicine, telejustice to schools, libraries, hospitals and law enforcement agencies through its statewide network.